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Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the sixty-sixth session

People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model

Letter dated 13 August 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I have the honour to request the inclusion in the agenda of the sixty-sixth session of the Assembly of a supplementary item entitled "People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, an explanatory memorandum in support of the above request (annex I) and the relevant draft resolution (annex II) are attached.

I have the honour to request that the present letter and its annexes be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) A. K. Abdul Momen

Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

In a world in which more than 3 billion people suffer from extreme poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy, and millions live in conflict or post-conflict countries and deprivation of their fundamental freedoms and human rights, peace remains as elusive as ever.

Even though the links between peace and development, peace and disarmament and peace and non-violence are well recognized, the fact that the people and their true empowerment must be at the centre of any development efforts that aim at achieving lasting and holistic peace is often overlooked. That peace, as an essential environment in which the full potential and inherent creativity of humankind is realized for the common good of humanity, is often undermined. Recent political developments around the world have also attested to the fact that democracy and people's empowerment, especially that of women, is a basic precondition for peace, as people's liberty, equality, human rights and development are inextricably linked as essential building blocks for peace. Peace is also a precondition for humane development, a right that is violated by wars, conflicts, terrorism, deprivation or a lack of democracy, justice and equal opportunity.

This multi-dimensional, holistic and integrated concept of an innovative "people's empowerment-centric peace model" has been the vision and lifelong mission of the peacebuilding efforts and peace leadership of Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, quite often referred to as "the daughter of peace and democracy". As a peace thinker and a people's leader Sheikh Hasina has been consciously promoting a multi-dimensional approach and a concept of peace that encompasses innovative peace paradigms championing "people's empowerment" and integrating interlinked and mutually reinforcing elements of peace and empowerment. These include (i) eradicating poverty and hunger; (ii) reducing inequality; (iii) mitigating deprivation; (iv) creating jobs for all; (v) including excluded people; (vi) accelerating human development; and (vii) fighting terrorism of all kinds.

A recipient of the UNESCO Peace Award 1998, the FAO Ceres Award, the Indira Gandhi Peace Award, the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Award and the gold medal of Paris-Dauphine University for her contribution to the democratization of her country and women's emancipation, Sheikh Hasina's tireless peacebuilding philosophy and efforts include a whole new range of peace reinforcers and multipliers, namely:

that peace, democracy and empowerment of the people are inextricably linked; peace is integral to humane development; global peace is the sum total of local and regional peace; peace is impossible without the removal of all sources of repression, inequality and deprivation; peace is impossible without alleviation and eventual eradication of poverty and economic disparity in a world of opulence; peace is impossible without institution-building on human rights, constitutional rights and justice; peace is impossible without true empowerment of women, political, economic and social; peace is impossible without a secular mindset and embracing diversity and multi-ethnicity; peace is impossible without including the marginalized; peace is impossible without job creation; peace is impossible without

transparency and accountability of Governments to citizens and a total respect for the rule of law.

Driven by this well-defined peace philosophy Sheikh Hasina throughout her life and her political career and state leadership propagated beliefs such as "all men and women should be treated as being morally and ethically equal", "human capabilities are unlimited" and "unlimited human capabilities can be realized through peace".

Inspired by these ideals and beliefs Sheikh Hasina set some exclusive examples and best practices for people's empowerment and development-centred peacebuilding efforts nationally, regionally and globally. She created the first-ever peacebuilding opportunity in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh by signing the first local Peace Accord in South Asia and establishing the rights of the ethnic minorities living there; successfully combated and contained terrorism, especially religious militancy and extremism in Bangladesh and set examples in the region; commissioned an independent trial of war criminals to bring justice to victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity of the 1971 War of Independence of Bangladesh; achieved the peaceful resolution of a domestic border guard mutiny; successfully fought and continues to fight poverty and empower women; found global acclaim through Bangladesh's high performance in the achievement of almost six of the eight Millennium Development Goals; enacted the first-ever law to prevent the grabbing of land from the Hindu minorities of Bangladesh and return confiscated properties with the repeal in 2010 of the Vested Property Act; fought corruption and established the national Human Rights Commission, Law Commission, Information Commission and Anti-Corruption Commission; and a national education policy that inculcates secular and meaningful education with free education up to class 12 for the girl child.

At the regional level she signed the Ganges Water-sharing Treaty and the anti-terrorism accord with India for food security and to combat terrorism in the region, promoting the anti-poverty movement in South Asia while making every effort to diffuse tension between neighbours India and Pakistan, promoting cultural cooperation and the economic integration of South Asia. She is a global advocate as well as a recognized Statesperson in the global climate change discourse for climate justice, empowering women, improving women's and children's health and fighting poverty and hunger and zero tolerance for terrorism of all kinds and the like.

The proposed "peace philosophy" of Sheikh Hasina, based on these personal, national, regional and international experiences, was disseminated to the global community of academicians, politicians, economists, peace, security and development practitioners at dedicated international seminars and conferences organized in 11 countries in Asia, Europe and the United States of America over the past nine months, where it received wide acclaim and acceptance as an innovative people's empowerment and development-centric peace model applicable for a wide range of developing countries with diverse cultural backgrounds. Such successful seminars include (a) international conference at Oxford University with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina as the chief guest, 27 January 2011; (b) international seminar at Stockholm University, 31 January 2011; (c) international seminar at Harvard University, 4 February 2011; (d) international seminar at Waseda University, Japan, 13 February 2011; (e) international meeting at the University of Sydney, Australia, 19 March 2011; (f) international meeting at the University of

Social Studies, Amsterdam, 25 March 2011; (g) international meeting at Shantinikatan, India, 30 March 2011.

Apart from the above, the group of eminent economists and development practitioners propagating the proposed model held briefing meetings with the Deputy Secretary-General, Asha-Rose Migiro at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 10 June 2011, who welcomed the "peace model" by Sheikh Hasina. Earlier, executive heads of leading specialized agencies and United Nations bodies, including FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNICEF and the World Trade Organization as well as the President of the Human Rights Council were also briefed on the proposed peace model.

The "peace model" was presented to the European Commission and representatives of the European Union Parliament, who received the model with enthusiasm and suggested floating it at the United Nations. In June 2011, the peace model was also explained to Representatives of the United States Congress and Members of the United States House of Representatives, including Democrat House Leader Ms. Nancy Pelosi, Mr. Hansen Clarke, Ms. Sheila Jackson Lee and Mr. Chris Van Hollen. In the United Kingdom the model was explained to Mr. Alan James Carter Duncan, MP (Conservative Party) and Minister of State in the Department of International Development in June 2011. Finally at an International Convention on Sheikh Hasina's Peace Model at the University of London a resolution entitled "People's empowerment: a peace model by Sheikh Hasina" was unanimously adopted in the presence of 580 participants.

In this context, Bangladesh proposes the inclusion in the agenda of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly of an item entitled "People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model" pioneered by Sheikh Hasina, a peace thinker and peacebuilder nationally, regionally and globally.

Bangladesh seeks the support of all fellow Member States, developing and developed, from the South and the North, to move this innovative peace model into the heart of the United Nations, the General Assembly, for further enriching it with peace thoughts and ideas for the greater and common good of the peoples of the world. This model, an original peacebuilding paradigm by Sheikh Hasina, if emulated globally, especially in developing countries but also in developed societies, will help to reduce inequality, disparity, deprivation and poverty while strengthening global efforts towards humane development and fighting terrorism.

A detailed background paper on Sheikh Hasina's peace philosophy and peace endeavours is attached for reference.*

* The background paper is on file with the Secretariat and is available for consultation.

Annex II**Draft resolution****People's empowerment and a peace-centric development model**

The General Assembly,

Bearing in mind the Charter of the United Nations, including the purposes and principles contained therein, and especially the dedication to saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war,

Noting the crippling effects of poverty and disparity all over the globe,

Recognizing that people should be the focal point in all plans, programmes and policies,

Reaffirming that true political leaders can awaken, make aware and empower the people,

Appreciating that Sheikh Hasina, the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, took all her major political decisions respecting the desires of the people,

Inspired by Sheikh Hasina's thoughts on people's empowerment through peace-centric development, which includes the interactions of several interrelated broad substantive components that need to be achieved simultaneously to ensure peace, namely, eradication of poverty and hunger, reduction of inequality, mitigation of deprivation, inclusion of marginalized people, job creation for all, acceleration of the process of humane development, and fighting all forms of terrorism and religious fundamentalism,

1. *Urges* all nations in the world to give first priority in all decision-making to the aspirations and wishes of the people;
2. *Invites* all international organizations to take lessons from the people's empowerment and peace-centric development model of Sheikh Hasina in designing their guidelines and policies, the implementation of which can lead to sustainable peace and prosperity for all.